







Ranger-Led Activities — Winter 2006 through Spring 2007

Join a Big Cypress Ranger or Volunteer for programs that explore the wonders of the Big Cypress Swamp and the Everglades ecosystem. For details on activities, or to make reservations call: (239) 695-1201. Reservations are accepted up to 14 days in advance of the activity date. Programs begin December 18, 2006, and go through April 15, 2007.

Big Cypress Activities	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
“What’s Out There?” — Twice daily. 1:00 and 2:00 p.m., 15 minute talks. Join a Ranger or Volunteer at H. P. Williams picnic area to see what you can discover in the Big Cypress Swamp. A spotting scope will be available to get a close-up look at alligators and a variety of colorful birds. No reservations required.	 X	X	X	X	X	X	X
“Scales, Teeth, and a Big Tail!” — Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday 2:00 p.m., 15 minute talks. Join a Ranger or Volunteer on the Oasis Boardwalk for a talk about our largest native freshwater reptile, the alligator. Discoveries abound. No reservations required.	 X		X		X		X
Cypress Sounds - Boardwalk Stroll — Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday 2:00 p.m., one-hour. Explore a variety of habitats and venture into the heart of a cypress strand during this one mile leisurely stroll on the Kirby Storter Boardwalk. Carry water. Binoculars and insect repellent optional. Meet at the boardwalk parking area on US 41. No reservations required.	 			X		X	X
Wet and Wild Swamp Walks — Sundays - 1:30 p.m., Mondays - 10:00 a.m. Approximately 2 hours. This is a great way to experience the swamp and discover what’s beyond the road! Cypress knees and sawgrass make long pants necessary. Wear sturdy shoes that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of clothes, including shoes, for your ride home. Reservations required. Meet at Oasis Visitor Center.	X	X					
Deep Lake or Gator Hook Hike — Saturdays - 1:00 p.m. Location changes on alternate weeks. Call the Visitor Center for details on where to meet. Deep Lake is one of the few natural sinkhole lakes south of Lake Okeechobee and is often a wildlife hotspot. (2 hours.) Gator Hook Strand is a more rugged hike, providing an opportunity to see a variety of plants deep in the swamp. (3 hours.) On either hike be prepared to get wet. Carry water, food, binoculars, sun protection, and insect repellent. Reservations required. Hikes begin 1/02/07, with the Deep Lake Hike.							X
Heart of the Swamp Canoe Trips — Saturdays and Sundays - 9:30 a.m., 4 to 5 hours. We’ll provide canoes and equipment or you may bring your own. Carry water, food, binoculars, sun protection and insect repellent. These trips vary by weather, water level, tide and ranger’s choice of location and duration. Knowing canoeing basics is helpful. Limited to 10 canoes. Reservations required.	X						X
Campfire Programs — Fridays and Saturdays - 7:30 p.m., January 1st through March 31st, 1 hour. Friday evening programs at Midway Campground. Saturday evening programs at Monument Lake Campground. Find out more about the natural and cultural history of this region. Bring a folding chair. Insect repellent optional. No reservations required.	 					X	X

Due to unforeseen circumstances this schedule is subject to change.
This document was printed through the generous support of the Everglades Association, Friends of Big Cypress National Preserve and visitor donations.



Activities On Your Own

There are many opportunities to explore Big Cypress National Preserve on your own or with your friends. For details on various activities stop by the Oasis Visitor Center and ask rangers for further information on access into the Preserve. You may also visit our website at www.nps.gov/bicy for further details.

Safety First

When traveling in Big Cypress National Preserve whether by car, foot, canoe, or off-road vehicle, always let someone know where you are going. Remember to fill out a backcountry permit if you are entering at one of the backcountry access points. To enjoy your visit be prepared by bringing water, food, insect repellent, sturdy shoes, and protection from the sun. Always be aware of your surroundings and respectful of the wildlife.

Wildlife Viewing

The Preserve’s expanse creates the possibility of viewing a wide variety of wildlife. You may see a multitude of bird life, or alligators and the fish they prey on, or even catch a glimpse of a black bear or the endangered Florida panther. Please observe wildlife respectfully and never attempt to feed or approach! Wildlife observation platforms are located at H. P. Williams Picnic Area - at the corner of Turner River Road and U. S. 41 (Tamiami Trail), and at the Oasis Visitor Center.

Driving

Excellent prospects for wildlife viewing by car can be found off of the Tamiami Trail on the scenic Loop Road or on the Turner River/Birdon Road loop. These gravel roads offer a passage for the patient observer to see the Preserve’s animal life and a multitude of subtropical habitats. You can help protect wildlife by observing the speed limit on all roads. Refer to the preserve map, or visit the visitor center for detailed locations of roads.

Walking

Kirby Storter Boardwalk is a one mile round trip adventure located off U.S. 41. Recommended year round, the trail offers an opportunity to submerge yourself into a beautiful cypress strand. Approximately half way along Loop Road is another short walk called Tree Snail Hammock Trail. This shady nature walk allows you to explore the mysteries of a tropical hardwood hammock in the southern portion of the Preserve.

Hiking

The Florida National Scenic Trail runs from North to South through the heart of Big Cypress. This trail, over forty miles long, presents excellent backpacking opportunities. A shorter hike, Fire Prairie Trail is five miles round trip and is found off of the northern end of Turner River Road. The trail provides superb views of several of South Florida’s habitats. Areas designated in the preserve for off road vehicles are also available to explorers on foot, but hikers need to safely give way to the off road vehicles when necessary.

Canoeing

Wander the waters of Big Cypress by bringing your own canoe or kayak, or renting them in nearby communities. The access for Turner River Canoe Trail is located along U.S. 41. Halfway Creek Canoe Trail offers another option and the ramp is also located off of U.S. 41 at the end of Seagrape Drive by Preserve headquarters. Typical canoe trips in the area will take a minimum of two to three hours.

Biking

Within the Preserve, many of the gravel roads off of Tamiami Trail, and several of the off-road vehicle trails, provide opportunities for exploration by bicycle. The Bear Island Grade, accessible from State Road 29, is a popular route. While biking in the preserve please be aware of traffic. While on backcountry trails yield to hikers and ORVs. For more details on biking opportunities speak to a ranger at the Oasis Visitor Center.

The Oasis Visitor Center in Big Cypress National Preserve is located mid-way between Naples and Miami on the Tamiami Trail (Hwy 41). Hours of operation: 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. daily. Closed December 25th. For an introduction to Big Cypress National Preserve, a 15 minute movie, *The Living Waters of Big Cypress*, is available for viewing. Also located at Oasis is a boardwalk for wildlife viewing and access to the Florida National Scenic Trail.